

FITNESS

Exercise for Every Fitness Level: Part I

These tips will increase your physical fitness, no matter what your current activity level. Remember to make changes to your exercise program gradually and with the permission of your physician.

I. Beginner Level: Getting Started

1. Make specific plans to begin exercising.

Setting specific exercise goals is a great technique to begin an exercise program. When developing personal exercise goal(s) they should answer the following: What type of exercise will I perform? When will I exercise? and How much exercise will I perform?

Step One: Developing an exercise goal. Here's an example:

What type of exercise will I perform? Walking

When will I exercise? Every other day before breakfast

How much exercise will I perform? 30 minutes of exercise

Exercise goal: I will walk every other day for 30 minutes before breakfast

2. Choose an activity you enjoy.

This way you will be more likely to keep it up, even when you feel busy or tired. Explore nearby parks, woods and beaches. Look for a water aerobics class at your local community center. Set up the treadmill in front of the television or bike along a scenic path.

3. Find a motivating environment.

Enjoy the silence of a solo walk or bike ride. Catch up with old friends or meet new people by joining a running club or softball league. Stay disciplined with an organized yoga, dance or kickboxing class. Have a personal trainer help you design a fitness routine to match your abilities and goals.

4. Add exercise to your daily routine.

If you have a strong back, try working in the yard. When walking the dog, try to keep up as he runs ahead. Take stretching or walking breaks throughout the day. Do errands by foot or bike instead of by car.

